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Presidential Jokes. Folkloristic Aspects of a Hungarian Scandal.

This paper attempts to exceed those well-known statements which only identify the Internet as an unavoidable medium for folklore research, and the online folklore as interesting, new research field for folklorists. The analysis of a case study (about Hungarian presidential jokes) provides an opportunity to scrutinize the methodological difficulties of collecting, archiving and examining of online folklore regarding the validity and authenticity of the informants. In my paper I analyze the folkloristic aspects of a Hungarian plagiarism case. In January 2012 a scandal broke in Hungary as a weekly magazine published an article which stated that the most part of the doctoral thesis of the Hungarian President, Pál Schmitt had been lifted from works by others without appropriate references. The unpopular President who had been perfect target of people's mock since his inauguration (mainly because of his servile behaviour and spelling skills) denied the allegations refers to plagiarism. I assume that the social pressure has led to the resignation of him. The Hungarian language internet community responded vigorously to the scandal and produced hundreds of visual and textual jokes about the credibility of the President. In my paper I investigate the online transmitted presidential jokes as special folklore phenomena. The case study investigate the characteristics of "Schmitt-lore" as well as the attributes and the genre system (if it can be assumed at all) of online or Internet folklore.